

The Issue of English and World History High School Textbooks in Japan, Viewed from World Englishes

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Introduction

The concept of World Englishes is the tolerance of English varieties, and does not regard native-English as an absolute Standard English. Sumith (1973), Kachru (1982) introduced the spread of English varieties. In Japan, Hino (1997, 2005, 2008, 2011) suggested the education of the concept of World Englishes as an International Language. Honna (2003, 2008) introduced the increase of English conversations among non-native English speakers. Yoshikawa (2009) opined the concept of World Englishes is valuable for Japanese to decrease learners' burden to master English. However, it does not seem to be easy to popularize the concept of World Englishes. A trend for native-English is connected with Japanese Western-oriented tendency. This paper examined where the tendency came from, by analyzing high school English and world history textbooks.

1. English textbooks research

1.1 Cover research

First, I examined English textbooks covers. A book cover is very important as "a face" of the book. The school textbooks are not exceptions. The cover conveys the policy of the book. From this viewpoint, I investigated covers of Japanese high school English textbooks.

1.1.1 Method

The English textbooks, "English II" authorized by the Japanese government, and basically for second grade high school students, are examined. The number is 36. The books are broken down into "westernized", "neither westernized nor not westernized" and "not westernized". "Neither westernized nor not westernized" is about nature, animals and plants, or environmental concerns.

1.1.2 Result

Table 1. High School English Text Books Cover Research

content	westernized	neither westernized nor not westernized	not westernized
sum	19	17	0

The results are above. English is an Anglo-American language; therefore, of 36 text books, 19 books show westerners or western life styles on their covers. There is no book defined as "not westernized" cover.

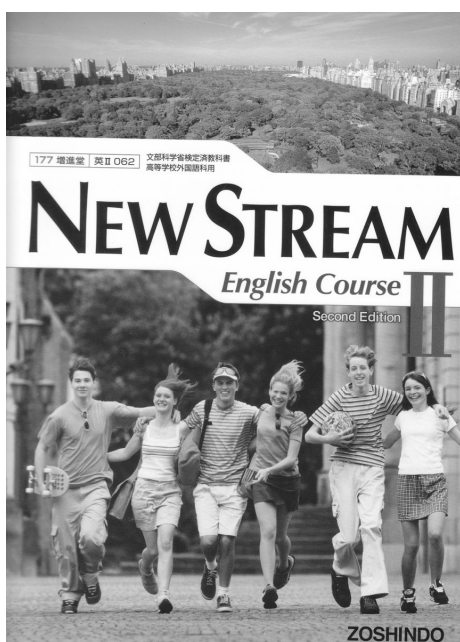


Figure 1. Westernized Cover

『New Stream English course Ⅱ (2008)
Zosindo

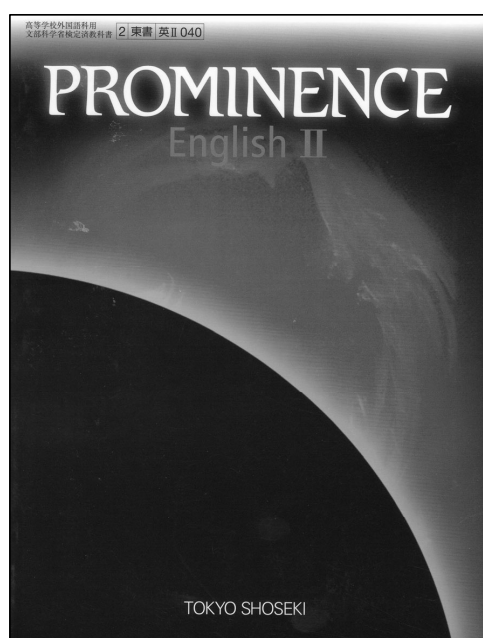


Figure 2. Neither Westernized nor not
Westernized Cover

『PROMINENCE English Ⅱ (2008)
Tokyo Shoseki

1.2 Content research

1.2.1 Method

The same 36 "English II" textbooks, are analyzed. They are classified by the difficulty levels in syntax, vocabularies, and phonetic presentations; "high", "middle" and "low". English textbooks varied among levels from junior high school review to university entrance exam preparation, even though they are the same category of textbooks. Many publishers make different types of textbooks, and they are perhaps classified by the level. On some low level books, there are "katakana" descriptions for learners' pronunciation support. On the

other hand, "high" level books carry advanced level writings which make readers think.

Topics on books are divided into three groups, numbered into "westernized-3", "neither westernized nor not westernized-2" and "not westernized-1". As the same as the cover research, "Neither westernized nor not westernized" is about nature, animals and plants, or environmental concerns. The number given by multiplying the topic number by the number of topics is divided by the all topic numbers, and finally the average of each book of the westernization is calculated.

Next, "high", "middle", and "low", class group averages are calculated. Finally, the three levels are broken into "high-2", "middle-1", and "low-0", and the correlation between westernized descriptions and the level is analyzed by using SPSS.

1.2.2 Result

Table 2. Level and Westernized Topics on "English II" Text Books

	Level	Westernized topic	Neither westernized nor not westernized topic	Not westernized topic
1	High	4	2	5
2	High	5	6	3
3	High	5	3	3
4	High	11	2	0
5	High	6	3	1
6	High	7	0	5
7	High	8	2	2
8	High	7	3	3
9	High	7	3	1
10	High	4	7	2
11	High	8	3	2
12	High	7	4	1
13	High	8	2	3
14	High	8	2	2
15	Middle	4	3	5
16	Middle	2	5	5
17	Middle	3	3	5
18	Middle	4	3	4
19	Middle	6	4	3
20	Middle	6	4	2
21	Middle	5	5	2
22	Middle	13	6	6
23	Middle	1	4	5

24	Low	4	4	6
25	Low	2	5	3
26	Low	3	5	4
27	Low	4	4	5
28	Low	4	6	5
29	Low	8	2	6
30	Low	5	5	3
31	Low	5	3	5
32	Low	4	5	3
33	Low	4	3	4
34	Low	6	3	4
35	Low	5	0	8
36	Low	3	2	7

There are 14 "high", 9 "middle", and 13 "low" level books. The average points of each group are 2.37 for "high", 2.04 for "middle", and 1.99 for "low". There are some significant differences even using descriptive analysis.

Table 3. Westernization by Level

level	n	M	SD	SE
high	14	2.3636	.23728	.06342
middle	9	2.0422	.23129	.07710
low	13	1.9908	.20451	.05672

The correlation between level and westernization is below. There is a strong correlation. The higher level textbooks, the more western topics are described.

Table 4. Correlation between Level and Westernization

		level	westernized
level	correlation coefficients-r	1	
	p (two-sided)		
	n	36	
westernized	correlation coefficients-r	.589(**)	1
	p (two-sided)	.000	
	n	36	36

**p < 0.01 (two-sided)

2. History text book research

2.1 Quantitative analysis of western description

Nest, Japanese world history textbook is investigated. The subject of the research is "Shosetsu World History B Kaiteiban" published by Yamakawa. This textbook has about a 50% market share; moreover, it is an essential textbook for university entrance exams. On the other hand, even the best selling English textbook, "Crown English Series II New Edition", has only about 10%. Most university entrance examinees who select "world history" in the social science area are assumed to use Yamakawa's world history textbook. So the book is selected as an investigation object.

Table 5. Western Description Pages on Yamakawa "World History B"

		title	page	western description pages
introduction		Changes of Homo sapiens	21-23	
Part	Chapter 1	Orient and Mediterranean world	24-57	34
	Chapter 2	Asian and American ancient civilization	58-80	
	Chapter 3	Formulation and development of East Asia	81-99	
	Chapter 4	Progress of Inner Asia	100-109	
	Chapter 5	Formulation and development of Muslim world	110-125	
	Chapter 6	Formulation and development of European world	126-158	33
	Chapter 7	Interaction of regions around the world	159-164	(2)
Part	Chapter 8	Prosperity of Asian regions	165-183	
	Chapter 9	Formation of Early Modern Europe	184-202	19
	Chapter 10	Expansion of European sovereign nation structure	203-219	17
	Chapter 11	Progress of early modern society in Europe	220-233	14
	Chapter 12	Development of modern national states in Western world	234-257	24
	Chapter 13	Agitation of Asian regions	258-275	18
	Chapter 14	Imperialism and Asian indigenous movement	276-297	22
	Chapter 15	Two World Wars	298-336	39
	Chapter 16	The Cold War and independence of the third world	337-357	(13)
	Chapter 17	Modern world	338-376	(18)
	Sum		376	253

In this book, 253 of all 376 pages contained western descriptions. They make up about two third over all. It means high school students study much western world history and learn little history of other areas. Their knowledge of the world history becomes to be unbalanced.

2.2 Western perspective on descriptions

There are many cases in the textbook whose view points are from the western- world. For example, the Crusades went to Jerusalem to regain western Christian control. There is no description from the Arab world viewing them as invaders. The citation about the Crusades explains their correct actions and following failure, and their influence on the non-Christian world. The Children's Crusade is cited as coming to a tragic ending. It impresses a beautiful image. The descriptions make students conceive the Crusades as justice side and the Christian side as justice. A figure of the textbook introduces stained-glass of martyrs.

Even though the topic is not limited to the non-western world, there are western-based descriptions. The insurgency of Sipahi is cited from the British side. Sipahi gathered Indian armies and at-



Figure 4. The Insurgency of Sipahi
"Shosetsu World History B Revised"
(2009) Yamakawa

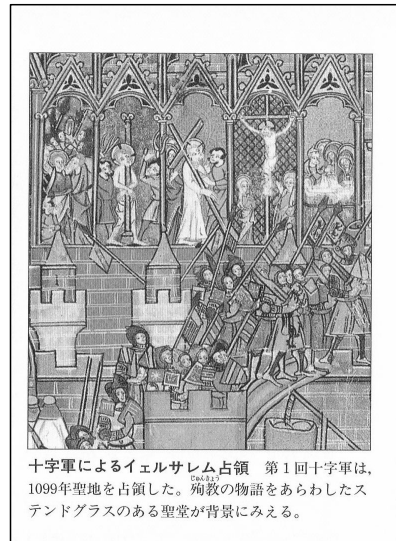


Figure 3. The Crusades
"Shosetsu World History B Kaitaiban"
(2009) Yamakawa

tacked the British colonial government. "Hanran" means a terrible action against the stable government. The citation views from the governing side, and the British side is a normal.

Actually, world history textbooks have changed gradually, especially on Japanese aggression before WW ; however, view points from the western world perspective has not changed. These appearances of "world history" descriptions might lead to decide students' tendency to the western world. The figure illustrated "The British government regained Delhi with costly sacrifices."

3. Students' favorite area research in "world history"

3.1 Method

High school students' favorite areas were examined. Informants are 23 third grade girls commercial high school students. They are given homework about world history for academic score plus. The homework is not obligated. The topic title of the homework report is free. Consequently, the submitters of the reports are eager students who do not need points to be added; therefore, the tendency of students who like "world history" can be analyzed.

3.2 Result

Table 6. High School Students' Favorite World History Topics

Topic	n
Christianity	4
Religions	2
Industrial Revolution	2
Napoleon	2
Renaissance	1
Egypt temples	1
Columbus	1
French Revolution	1
The Civil War	1
Italy and Germany	1
Ancient Greece	1
Chaplin	1
WW	1
WW	1
Muhammad	1
Chinese characters	1
Mathematicians	1
Sum	23

Only "Muhammad" and "Chinese characters" are non-western world topics. "Neither western nor no-western" topics are two "Religions" and one "Egypt temples". "Mathematicians" are about westerners. Western-world reports accounted 18 of 23 reports.

4. Analysis

English textbooks regard English as an Anglo-American language. However, recently, English has become an international language in the global world for communication. Therefore, the conception that English is as Anglo-American language does not match real world situations. Nevertheless, Japanese high school high level textbooks tend to be more westernized than other levels' texts. Low level textbooks have communicative lessons for the Japanese classroom or other venues, and mostly succeed junior high school texts, so there are a few western topics. Recently, Japanese speak English with non-native speakers; therefore, it is irrational to emphasize many western topics on the texts.

The world history textbook devotes many pages to western descriptions and even in the other areas, the viewpoint is from a western perspective. There are two situations and viewpoints when one conflict occurs. Therefore, a one-sided approach is unfair. Such one-sided historical interpretations do not give students a well-balanced world-view. Maybe it is one reason that most students are interested in western world history. That might lead to excessive western-oriented leaning.

Conclusion

Learners who use high level English textbooks and Yamakawa's world history textbook will become future Japanese leaders. It is a problem that high school textbooks plant sectional world interests. Under the present education system, the concept of World Englishes would not succeed greatly. However, social field scholars notice westernized world history textbooks that don't match the real Japanese situation. The Science Council of Japan suggested a new subject; "basic history", that focuses on modern Asian history (2011, 8, 3). If Japan put more emphasis on Asian areas in political and economical environments, and the social study's field's trial succeeds, then World Englishes would be accepted more readily.

As for giving students equitable worldviews, I expect that English and social study educational fields read to work together and redress western-biased education.

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